

Superior National Forest



Honeymoon Trail, Oct 20, 2016

Fall Color Report October 21, 2016

Now Autumn's fire burns slowly
along the woods and day by day
the dead leaves fall and melt.

- William Allingham



The fire of autumn leaves is nearly extinguished. Once again, the forest has gone through its annual transformation from green to bare, going through a red, gold, and yellow passing glory which is no less spectacular for its inevitability. Each year, we can mark off with fair accuracy when autumn will occur, but each year it seems to be able to surprise us nonetheless. It is always shorter than normal, or longer than normal, more brilliant, colder, warmer,

browner, redder, but never is it 'normal'. Just like a campfire, you know there will be flames, and there will be smoke, but where the flames will be, where the perfect marshmallow roasting spot is, and who will get the smoke in their face is unknown until the fire is lit and the flames are there. The fire is almost out now, just a few glowing coals of leaves clinging to twigs in the wind.

People may come by and look at the ashes, wondering what the fire looked like, how bright the leaves really were, but it can't really be described. To experience fall, as with campfires, you had to be there.



There may be a Halloween report of bare branches and haunted woods next week, but the colors of autumn are essentially burned out on the Superior. Soon the woods will be coated in new colors of white and blue as winter arrives in the Northwoods.

